Food Gives Me Energy

This activity is adapted by permission from *Nutrition Fun with Broccoli and Roll* by Connie Liakos Evers, MS, RD.

**Description:** This basic nutrition activity encourages young students to think about the benefits of healthy eating. Students create lists of activities they like to do, then list their favorite healthy foods that will give them the energy to do these activities.

**Learning Objectives:** Students will learn that healthy eating gives us the energy to do our favorite activities.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCIENCE TOPICS</th>
<th>GRADE LEVEL</th>
<th>PROCESS SKILLS</th>
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<td>Human health</td>
<td>K–2</td>
<td>Choosing healthy foods</td>
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<td>Importance of healthy foods</td>
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**TIME REQUIRED**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Advance Preparation</th>
<th>Set Up</th>
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<td>10 minutes</td>
<td>5 min</td>
<td>30 minutes</td>
<td>5 min</td>
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**ACTIVITY MATERIALS**

- Copies of *Food Gives Me Energy* activity sheet (one per student)
- Pencils or pens (one per student)
- Large sheet of paper or dry erase board
- Markers
- Crayons or colored pencils in several bowls or containers (optional)
**ADVANCE PREPARATION**

- Make copies of the *Food Gives Me Energy* activity sheet (one per student).
- If students will be coloring their sheets, place crayons or colored pencils in several small containers that can be distributed around the activity stations.

**SET UP**

- Hang the large sheet of paper up where students will be able to see it while brainstorming as a group.

**INTRODUCING THE ACTIVITY**

Tailor your presentation to your individual style and to students’ ability levels. Sample scripts and example questions are provided in italics.

- Begin the class with a group discussion. *With this activity we are going to learn about nutrition and why it is important to eat healthy foods. Has anyone heard the word nutrition before? Does anyone know what we mean when we talk about nutrition? Nutrition is the science of healthy eating.*

- *Why do you think it’s important to eat healthy foods?*

- Help students brainstorm as necessary. Record students’ answers on a large piece of paper or a white board. Make sure to keep the class focused on positive reasons to eat healthy foods. Possible answers include:
  - Keeping our bodies strong and healthy (muscles, teeth, bones, heart, etc.).
  - Helping us to feel good (happy, energetic, etc.).
  - Giving us the energy to do our favorite activities (sports, play, school, etc.).
  - Keeping our brains working and helping us do well in school (smarter, better grades, pay attention in class, etc.).

- Next, brainstorm examples of healthy foods.

- Record students’ answers. Possible answers include: whole grains, fruits and vegetables, lean meats (e.g., turkey, chicken, fish), low fat dairy (cheese, yogurt, milk), beans and nuts, foods low in added sugar, salt, saturated fat, and cholesterol, etc.

- Once the class has finished brainstorming, tell them they are going to do an activity where they list some of their favorite things to do and some of their favorite healthy foods that help them do those things.
PROCEDURE

- Pass around sheets.
- Have students make their lists. If necessary, remind them of some of the examples the class brainstormed together.
- Now you’re making your own list!
- After making their lists, have students color in their sheets, if desired and as time allows.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Remember, there are no incorrect answers. Let students present their ideas and guide the conversation to the greatest extent possible.

- Ask students to share items from their lists.
- What is one of your favorite activities to do? What is one of your favorite healthy foods?
  Students will have a variety of items to share.
- How do you think these foods can help us do our favorite things?
  Possible answers include: they give us vitamins, minerals, nutrients, protein, etc., that our bodies need; they keep us healthy and active; and they give us the energy we need to be active.

CLEAN UP

- Ask students to gather crayons and pencils and place them back in containers.

POSITIVE MESSAGES

Children may easily lose interest in nutrition activities if too much emphasis is placed on how proper nutrition prevents disease. Instead, emphasize positive nutrition messages. Remind children that healthful food promotes achievement. In school or on the playing field, kids who eat well perform better and achieve higher levels of mastery. A nutritious diet fuels the body for learning, growth, sports, and play.
Food gives me energy

So I can do... MY FAVORITE THINGS! How about you?